

Mid-Atlantic Hydric Soils Committee Meeting
Tuesday, June 18 & Wednesday, June 19, 2002
The Poconos, PA

A. Introduction

Present: Leander Brown (NRCS, MD), Kevin Bilash (EPA, PA), Artika Rangan (EPA, PA), John Galbraith (VA Tech, VA), Harold Jones (USACE,VA), Amanda Muir (EPA, PA), Martin Rabenhorst (U. of MD, MD), Ralph Spagnolo (EPA, PA), Al Rizzo (USFWS, MD) Ed Stein (NRCS, NY), Jim Dolittle (NRCS), Jake Ekenrode (NRCS,PA), Ronnie Taylor (NRCS, DE), Phil King (NRCS,DE), Tim Craul (NRCS, State College)

B. Updates – Hydric Soils Website & Guide to Hydric Soils Book

The website research will be updated; Marty sent his to Ralph and John will send his. Al needs some info from Bruce but is almost done otherwise, and Jeff gave final report to headquarters for grant. All agencies involved need to be recognized on site, and there can be agency links. Also add links to contact committee members directly by email. Patrick Drohan asked to have Shepherd's College added as a link.

The book is nearing completion and looks to be in publication before the next meeting in January. The chapters are almost all done, still need Mary Anne to review Regulation, Leander to review Formation, and Karen to review Functions. The final reviews will be mailed with a copy of the minutes after the meeting. Al had a question about the chapter he was working on. Felt that parts were missing and that there was too much opinion. Group feels that there should be another reviewer (Harold) and their comments should be sent to Bruce.

Discussed the question of printing hard copies if CD's are produced and the material will be available for free on the Internet. 250 CD's will be ordered, and 100 hard copies will be available as an option for the buyer. Different ways to advertise the web publication included business cards with URL address, emails, and links on other web sites. The document will have a Virginia Cooperative Extension bulletin number.

C. Field Indicators

The acknowledgments and addresses in the comments section were changed. Decided that the map of the Eastern Seaboard should have a boundary placed around the Mid-Atlantic States (NY – NC). This was necessary because the User Notes are regional and needed to be presented as such. Decided to print 2000 new insides and 1000 new binders for the indicators book. Discovered that the F1 indicator was not listed in section T. The F5 indicator will be changed; the first line will be removed. When talking about Redox Depressions (F8) decided to add a note that the indicator was not meant to be used in circumstances such as tree tip pits, or gilgai micro reliefs, which need to be added to glossary. Comments should be sent to Kevin no later than two weeks after the meeting. Marty and John said they would send out edited indicators to the group within a month. The diagrams, which were updated by Marty and John, are based on Version 5. John worked on two things he thought should be added to the book: Correlation chart between 1987 manual and FI version 4.0 and a consistent chart of hydric soils showing depth requirement, hue, chroma, etc. all be listed in the same order to ease the need to read all the way through the indicator to find what information you need. Committee agreed this was a good idea. Will have to compare to National for correctness. Leander started reviewing already and should finish, the rest of the committee should receive a copy to review within two weeks.

D. Field Trip

The purpose of this trip was to demonstrate Ground Penetrating Radar and EMI. The site was a farm located on a Lacustrine flood plain about 20 minutes from the hotel. The inhabitants remarked that the field was frequently flooded. We observed thick, dark surface material and Alluvial sandy material. It was a good site for a field test because we were able to see segmented horizons and easily characterize the soils. The equipment also worked very well. We found one hydric soil at the bottom of the slew. Also, at this field trip, we experienced the quote of the meeting: “If it walks like a duck, If it quacks like a duck, I just don’t understand what the soils are telling me.” - Leander Brown.

E. Red Parent Material (TF2 Study)

The Mid-Atlantic Hydric Soils Committee is conducting this study. New ecotone wells will be bought as older wells are discontinued. The first site scouted in Virginia needed to be changed because the soil was not problematic, and another well is needed at the Maryland site. Group decided that wells should be checked on in two weeks to make sure that they are actually recording data. 2001-02 turned out to be a dry year and the soil being studied might not meet hydric. John is having trouble with temperature readings. Members suggested buying a plastic cover from Lincoln or cutting a piece of PVC tubing himself (need to be careful about gluing the seals). Ed had a problem with getting software. Group complained about policy and Marty offered to lend Ed his software. NRCS will place wells in Canaan Valley.

F. ABLs (Anomalous Bright Loamy Soils)

Hydric soils that occur on coastal plains at low elevations near coastal marshes. The group was scandalized at the loams’ brightness. The hypothesis that the soil was

saturated but not reducing proved false for anaerobic conditions were discovered. Marty needs to come up with a few more hypotheses. The study still has another year to go.

G. Piedmont HGM Research

This is a study of problematic soils in the Piedmont region. The buried soils were believed to be post colonial or older, but carbon dating proved them to be 2-3000 years old. The sites are poor to somewhat poorly drained wetlands. Marty feels that the vegetation needs to be documented, members will help with that. The Virginia site is unlike others in that there are no buried soils and the water flows into the 1st order stream instead of the other way around. The soils are dark and appear hydric, but the site doesn't have wetland hydrology.

H. Field Indicators Continued

The group reviewed the charts and diagrams and found them to be very complete and informative. There was a suggestion to add a note in the comment section that the charts don't need to be read from left to right. John pointed out that the indicators are not always in the same order, there is little consistency. He presented a table format where all the indicators are in the same format. The committee decided it was a good idea to have as an addition in the back. It needs to be edited and Ralph will send it out to the group.

I. Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held in Ocean City, MD on January 7 & 8, 2003. Next year's June meeting will be in Virginia.
Thank you to all the planners.